

[Mr. Chairman.]

attend the current session of the Rajya Sabha which began its sitting from 21st February, 1955. I, therefore, request for granting me permission of the House to remain absent till the 20th March, 1955."

Is it the pleasure of the House that permission be granted to Thakur Bhanu Pratap Singh for remaining absent from the meetings of the House till the 20th March 1955?

*(No hon. Member dissented.)*

Permission to remain absent is granted.

#### PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

##### (1) POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS AUDIT REPORT, 1955—PART I.

##### (2) MINISTRY OF FINANCE (REVENUE DIVISION) NOTIFICATION PUBLISHING FURTHER AMENDMENT TO CENTRAL EXCISE RULES, 1944.

THE MINISTER FOR REVENUE AND DEFENCE EXPENDITURE (SHRI A. C. GUHA): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table under clause (1) of article 151 of the Constitution, a copy of the Audit Report (Posts and Telegraphs), 1955—Part I. [Placed in the Library. See No. S-85/55.]

I also lay on the Table, under section 38 of the Central Excise and Salt Act, 1944, a copy of the Ministry of Finance (Revenue Division) Notification (Central Excise) No. 3, dated the 1st March 1955, publishing further amendment to the Central Excise Rules, 1944. [Placed in the Library. See No. S-84/55.]

THE APPROPRIATION (RAILWAYS) BILL, 1955—*continued*

SHRI H. C. MATHUR: (Rajasthan): Mr. Chairman, I am really grateful to the Deputy Minister for Railways as also to the Railway Minister for making kind references to what I said. I will lay before you certain facts—facts which would be based absolutely on the records of the Railway Administration which will further reinforce every word that I said on the last occasion. I have felt the necessity of doing so because the hon. Minister had dismissed all that I said as almost mild charges but before doing so, I certainly wish to acknowledge that I have always invariably received extraordinary courtesy at the hands of the hon. Railway Minister but as I pointed out last time, I don't wish to mix these personal sentiments with the criticism which one has to offer on the floor of the House. The hon. Deputy Minister said—very correctly pointed out—that I have possibly not reconciled myself to the democratic set up in which I find myself here. It is really true that I cannot reconcile myself to a democracy where the Opposition is not listened to. I am not reconciled to a democracy where the Parliament is denied access to reports which have been announced in Parliament, which bear on public safety and which are of great interest not only to the Members of Parliament but to the public in general. When I spoke about the subject last time, I requested you to use your good offices to see that this report is placed on the Table of this House. Since then something very interesting has happened. The Chairman of this Committee had an occasion to speak about it and give a personal explanation in this matter and you will be very interested to know what the Chairman himself has said about it. He said:

"The Committee reviewed 3282 accidents and I can tell the House that the Committee went very deep into all aspects of railway working. On the floor of this House, I would